Report and Photos of *Ciona savignyi* Removal
Sund Rock North Wall, Hood Canal
Near Hoodsport, WA
Wednesday, October 25, 2006

TEAM LEADER

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INTRODUCTION

Six members of the Washington Scuba Alliance (WSA) and the Reef Environmental Education Foundation (REEF) gathered on Wednesday Oct 25th at Sund Rock in Hood Canal near Hoodsport, WA to remove the invasive tunicate, *Ciona savignyi*. Two dives per team member were conducted. The first dive had as its objectives to survey, take photographs / video, and lay a boundary line so we could keep track of the patches we were working on. The second dive focused on actual removal efforts.

We were able to do some removal on the first dive, but the majority was done on the 2nd dive. Average dive times were about 35-40 minutes each. Most work was conducted at depths of 55 to 75 fsw.

We were able to remove a good majority of the *Ciona savignyi* that we found. However, we are quite concerned about its ability to spread. We last surveyed there two weeks ago. It appears to have spread in the short time since first discovered. This growth occurred despite the low oxygen event in Hood Canal that was taking place simultaneously.

Photos, both underwater and above water, are now posted on:

http://nwgeogirl.smugmug.com/gallery/2052016

PARTICIPANTS

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LESSONS LEARNED

- The tool of choice was a pair of kitchen tongs. You need to grasp along the length of the tunicate and firmly pull where it's attached to the rock.

- It has a very good grip on the surface. Plastic spatulas work good when the Ciona is back in cracks and just need to be mutilated.

- Contrary to its appearance, the tunicate is quite sturdy and does not disintegrate in your grasp.

- Scraping the tunicate off the rock just releases tons of little blobs into the water column, which you then have to rush around gathering up. It was often easier to pick one individual at a time.

- Our entire day's take fit into the very smallest goody bag we had. The tunicate compresses to a fraction of its original size when disturbed and removed from the rock, and even more when out of water.

- Removing Ciona savignyi involves work at depths of 55 – 75 feet. Nitrox would have helped considerably with our bottom time, as well as larger tanks. Going on a low tide for removal would also help with depth and bottom time.

- Ciona savignyi will reattach to another hard surface if removed, but not destroyed. JD Rowe put a rock with nothing attached to it into his goody bag, and by the time he was done with his dive, Ciona savignyi individuals he had removed and put in the bag, had attached themselves to that rock.

- If you cannot collect the tunicate properly, make sure you mutilate it enough so it will not attach and grow elsewhere.

- Large goody bags are useless and get in the way. Use small sized mesh bags for collection.

- 1 bucket with a lid is plenty large to use as the group collection spot.

ISSUES

Is there a way that certain trained volunteer divers could be issued a general permit to be able to remove any Ciona savignyi they see at any dive site in Puget Sound/Hood canal? It is showing up in many places now, and we don't want a repeat of what's happened at Sund Rock.

Some divers are confusing Corella with Ciona – so this will be important to point out the differences in our training of other divers.

SUMMARY

The biggest thing we became keenly aware of is that *Ciona* MUST be controlled in the early invasive stages. It would be so much easier to control if only a few individuals are present and easily picked.

For more information, contact Janna Nichols at 360-798-6414.